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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as FIRST CLASS MAIL in an envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on

March 1, 2004

Cathy Pittman

* * *

Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Dear Sir:

Please consider the following amendments prior to examining the patent application that is submitted herewith.

Amendments to the Specification begin on page 2 of this paper.

Amendments to the Claims are reflected in the listing of claims, which begins on page 5 of this paper.

Remarks begin on page 8 of this paper.